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ENGLAND AND GERMANY IN THE WAR

LETTERS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

BY
ROBERT J. THOMPSON
AMERICAN CONSUL
AIX-LA-CHAPELLE
(RESIGNED)



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Robert J. Thompson

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American Consul, Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany
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Dedicated to
THOSE WHO HOLD PRINCIPLE
ABOVE POSITION

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE

THIS book comprises a series of letters addressed to the Secretary of State by Mr. Robert J. Thompson, recently American consul at Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany, who resigned from his post, as the letters explain, purposely to be free from official restrictions in reporting facts of the European war situation as he has found them.*

Mr. Thompson is a citizen of Chicago. He has spent close to ten years in the consular service in Germany and England, and has also spent much time in France, the beautiful Lafayette monument in Paris being the result of his suggestion and effort.

He entered the foreign service upon the recommendation of friends among the business men of the country for the purpose of demonstrating what a successful business man might accomplish in the direction of extending American foreign trade. The character of his reports and observations reveal an independent point of view somewhat out of, if not above the ordinary.

The letters set forth that their author is not pro-German, by predilection or inclination; rather that ties of blood, friendship, sentiment and intimate

*["Thompson's Letters" were first printed serially in the Chicago *Tribune*, from February 14 to February 21, 1915. This great newspaper claimed for that period the largest circulation it had had since the beginning of the war, attributing this gain to Mr. Thompson's letters. They created a sensation and much comment.

It is due largely to the demand of the *Tribune* readers that these semi-official despatches extended and elaborated are now produced in book form.]—*Publishers.*

At no time in the history of civilization have the people of the world, individually, been so intensely absorbed from every angle on any subject as in the causes and progress of the European war.

In spite of racial prejudices, there is a universal and growing demand for fair play, and a desire to get at all the facts from all sides. When the war blaze burst forth on July 31, 1914, Mr. Robert J. Thompson was stationed as American consul at Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany. This was the center around which occurred the initial stirring incidents of military operations. When hostilities opened, every correspondent, and many prominent Americans who were there felt the shock of the war thunderbolt, and insist that Consul Thompson in his work typified the ideal diplomat and American consul. The manner in which he pulled on and off his white gloves in the midst of a group of excited people, while deliberating on this or that question, remaining absolutely neutral and cool-headed, keeping both ears open to the sympathetic appeals of citizens of the nations at war, as well as to the appeal of Americans and other aliens, was an experience that tested his perfect poise. He was master of the situation.

Years of public service and careful observation had prepared him for this very exigency for which he has received the unstinted appreciation of all concerned, including our own state department and other foreign offices. The mere description of his work was praise indeed, dear to an American. He was doing so much and saying so little that a record of those eventful days at Aix-la-Chapelle remains an important chapter in American consular history of international importance.

However much readers may disagree with Mr. Thompson in some of his conclusions, he has a pro-

found and thorough way of presenting his views which are not the result of mere affirmation, but an analysis of cause and effect, and concrete facts and conditions. The powerful and predominant note in these letters, is the practical plan which the author offers for the solution of international problems and the permanent abolishment of war, the one thought uppermost in the mind of all the world today.

In his epistolary discussions there is always apparent an incisive grasp of those vital and essential points that at least modify emotional prejudices if not change convictions. His work impresses readers with the feeling that he is a thinker and that his point of view is based upon personal observations made with painstaking carefulness which recognizes that the most logical conclusion upon any subject must come after a comparative and thorough analysis of events and things clear to the physical vision as well as to academic research.

THE PUBLISHERS.

INTRODUCTION

American Consulate,
Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany.

To the Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:—

I have the honor to state that, having been accustomed during the years I have spent in the Consular Service, to address the reports of my investigations to the Secretary of State, I purpose now to continue that practice and present herewith the first of a series of open letters, addressed to you, which will contain facts which I have gathered and conclusions which I have reached in relation to Germany and England and the present war.

I feel that I am warranted in following this course for the reason that the facts which I have gathered, and which I shall submit, have been acquired during my long service—practically a decade—as American Consul in the two countries named, including five months' presence at the practical seat of war.

Because of the department's instruction to make neither investigations nor reports on the serious—and at that time acute—subject of military reprisals, I have withheld all of my observations and reports, until my resignation would give me freedom to speak fully and in direct accordance with the facts.

A sense of duty is involved in my action, as I feel that the atmosphere should be cleared, and that our fitness to sit at the great conciliation and arbitration board, which shall eventually adjudicate the claims of the contending nations, and shape the future policy of the world, depends upon our true understanding of the whole subject—which can come only through knowledge of all of the facts of the case.

Having entered the Consular service for the sole purpose of serving, and not of filling a soft political job, I sincerely regard my present action as a continuation of service, the value of which, I feel, will be enhanced by the procedure of addressing these letters to you. They are, as you will note, of a character supplementary to those already forwarded to you, from Aix-la-Chapelle, where the entire series was prepared, in the line of my duty (as I saw it) as a representative of the American people on the ground.

My desire is to give testimony in as formal, impartial form as I may be able to submit it—such testimony as history will demand, and sound statesmanship will require.

The modern world is at war. An appalling social cataclysm is enveloping its leading peoples, destroying the lives of hundreds of thousands of them, the most vigorous representatives of the main races of the world, whose loss means a vital subtraction of virility from the whole human race.

To be a witness of this phenomenon—this orgasm of destruction—and to fail to realize its significance, or to apprehend its consequences, and, especially, to fail to investigate and analyze its precedents, would be to fail in my duty—that larger duty which every man owes to his fellows—to society—and which is greater than his duty to himself.

We, who are living at the present time, have a great responsibility, which rests directly upon us—the responsibility of ascertaining the facts behind the great catastrophe that has overwhelmed Europe; and our first need and duty, in this direction, is to lay aside both favoritism and prejudice.

We must be loyal to facts, or we are traitors to life.

The pressure of facts is the real cause of my action in resigning from the Consular service. No other impulse has directed me. I have not been moved to this decision in order to take up my pen in behalf or in defense of Germany. What I shall state will be evidence in behalf of civilization, for sound civilization is what we must have if we are to be rid of war and the causes of war, both desultory and direct.

If what I say of Germany and England may savor of admiration for one and criticism of the other, let me say that my statements will be the result of conviction—of facts which have been impressed upon me and conclusions which have been forced upon me, as a result of years of observation and study, and in spite of an unsympathetic attitude and adverse conclusions previously formed.

Also, if my phrase, at times, may seem extreme or partisan, it is because my convictions having been formed slowly, if not grudgingly, have at last become deep and positive, and thus may color and shape my expression.

It will be my endeavor to interpret, in part, the German people, their motives and achievements, to the American people; to

portray them as I have found them actually to be, and in this portrayal to show, at least in a small degree, the part they more recently have taken in the progress of the world, and why the success of their institutions and the potentiality of their national life lead them to wish to perpetuate both and extend them as they grow.

If in my report of the conduct of Germany, leading up to and during the present war, I submit facts which may be in contradiction of statements made by others, I do this, not in a spirit of contention, but in the cause of justice and progress—to clear away the accumulation of exaggeration and misrepresentation that now hides the foundation of truth, upon which all conclusion and action must be based.

Few will say that Germany has had equal access with its opponents to the great court of the sympathy and support of the world. Especially at the beginning of hostilities, when all stood aghast, stunned by the stupendous convulsion, instinctively and impulsively seeking its cause and source—the nation to be blamed—more especially at this crucial time, during these critical first days, when public opinion was being framed largely upon the proclamations and representations

of her enemies, was Germany deprived, utterly, of approach to the public ear.

This fact should not be lost sight of in estimating the causes of the present state of public opinion in the United States; and it affords a reason for those who know Germany to be different in act and in motive from what she has been represented to be, to come forward and state it, and to present and discuss the moving facts of the situation.

But the presentation of Germany's position in the present war and the revelation of its aspirations and life are not my ultimate object in preparing these letters—and especially in addressing them to you. I have a larger motive than that. In my concluding letter I shall presume to suggest a line of action that is open to the United States in her present unique position, by following which we may take advantage of our leadership among nations to effect national disarmament and forever banish war from the world.

In conclusion, I wish to state that it is not part of the purpose of these letters to take direct issue with the attitude of our government and its administration; not intentionally, at least. I have no personal quarrel with the Department of State; and I do not propose to discuss or question the

sincerity of its position or that of President Wilson, who announces his purpose to maintain a strict neutrality.

If the stand of the United States be not impartial in the present desperate international situation, and if your interpretation of the accepted rules of war be unfair, a more definite criticism will be applied to your position and action than any I might assume to make.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul (Resigned).

ORIGINAL LETTER TO SECRETARY OF STATE

American Consulate,
Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany,
September 17th, 1914.

Hon. W. J. Bryan,
Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Bryan:—

Events have developed so rapidly since August 3rd, and so continuously, that I no more than find time to write of them before they seem trivial and ancient in comparison with the more recent and important occurrences.

I wish to report to the Department, however, my efforts and their results in the direction of assisting representatives of the American Press to forward important statements to their respective papers and the people of the United States.

On August 29th, John T. McCutcheon and James O'Donnell Bennett, of the Chicago *Tribune;* Irvin S. Cobb of the *Saturday*

Evening Post and Philadelphia *Public Ledger;* Roger Lewis of the *Associated Press;* and Harry Hansen of the Chicago *Daily News,* came upon the consulate, having been conducted by the German military authorities to Aix-la-Chapelle from the battlefields along the Belgian-French frontier. The commanding officer here declined to issue them passes to go into Holland or to return to Belgium, but placed no restrictions upon their passing further into Germany in the direction of Cologne and Berlin. They elected to remain in Aix-la-Chapelle, from which point they could mail articles to their publishers through the nearby frontier-town of Vaals, Holland.

Their experiences and observations with and in the rear of the German army in Belgium, from Brussels to Beaumont, and from there to Aix-la-Chapelle, covered a period of ten days and will, before this reaches you, be published in their respective papers.

On arriving at Aix-la-Chapelle, where the English and American papers were to be seen, they were shocked to note the innumerable reports of atrocities and brutalities alleged to have been committed by the German troops in the territory which they had just traversed.

These gentlemen, who at the time of their arrival in Europe were decidedly anti-German in sentiment and convictions, at once prepared a joint statement which I advised them I would use my best efforts to have forwarded by wireless to the Western Union Telegraph Company in New York for transmission to their several papers.

Evidently these well-known American journalists were not so much concerned by their desire to send exclusive and startling stories to their papers as they were moved by a sense of fair play for their fellow countrymen, who were entitled at least to a clearer picture of things than they were receiving from an interested source, controlling the sole means of communication between Germany and America. It seemed to me, likewise, most important that the American people have as much of the truth as it is possible to convey to them on the one most terrifying feature of this present war; hence I had their statement telegraphed to Berlin for forwarding by wireless telegraphy to America, if possible.

I have observed that various appeals are being made to America to break its neutrality and join the opponents of Germany on account

of the alleged inhuman conduct of the German military, its cruelty and drunkenness. I am here on the frontier where the Belgian reprisals began and am to some extent personally familiar with the circumstances leading to the commencement of these acts. In a broad sense, it may be said that the German, and especially the German soldier, does not get drunk. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule; but in support of the military law against supplying soldiers with alcoholic drinks, the Government has issued a decree fixing a severe penalty for soldiers drinking intoxicants as well as for persons giving intoxicants to them.

There has been a terrific outcry in Germany against the unexpected participation of the Belgian civil populace in the war. This outcry did not arise without definite cause. On requesting a pass from the Garrison Commander at Aachen, then General von Korpff, to send a messenger into a nearby Belgian village to investigate the shooting of a British subject, this gentleman related to me, under great mental stress, instance after instance of German officers and men being shot and killed while at rest, by farmers, even by young girls, whom he stated fired upon them while passing a

glass of milk or water. He gave me these details at the moment in order to impress me with the danger of sending a messenger into those districts, Baelen-Dolhain, at that time, August 17th, and his inability to guarantee protection for my messenger.

The reprisals made by the German military have been severe and possibly beyond modern precedent, but I am convinced that when the facts are brought out they will expose causes, which, under the circumstances, may have extenuated, if not justified, their conduct, as the Germans claim.

In Liege I spent the night as guest at the "Duesseldorfer Lazarett," a temporary war-hospital, opened August 17th in the main University building there, by three prominent ladies of Dusseldorf.

The hospital referred to was attacked on the 20th of August, three days after it was opened and thirteen days after the entry of the German troops into Liege. According to my examination the building was the object of rifle volleys from two sides, the effect of the bullets showing in the broken windows. As a result of this attack thirteen men, principally Russian, English and Belgian students, were caught and executed in the University Square, and twenty buildings, principally lodging

houses, from whence the shooting came, destroyed.

I hope to be able, if time permits, to investigate certain charges of the murder of sleeping, wounded and defenseless German soldiers, made against the Belgian villagers and farmers just over the frontier between here and Liege.

I will send you, from time to time, some illustrated German papers.

You will pardon this semi-personal letter. I can write more freely in this manner.

With great respects and regards,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul.

RESIGNATION

[*Publishers' Note:* In response to the foregoing letter an instruction was received from the department directing Consul Thompson to cease all investigations and discontinue all reports as suggested—the result of which was the resignation of Mr. Thompson as shown in the following despatch.]

American Consulate,
Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany,
New York, January 20, 1915.

To the Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:—

I have the honor to tender herewith my resignation as consul at Aix-la-Chapelle.

"Great stress of work in connection with my position as Consul at Aix-la-Chapelle, both official and of a semi-official nature, has prevented my disposing of the question raised by the Department instruction, ordering me to discontinue investigations and to make no reports on the subject of war reprisals.

"I come now to this matter and if it appear that I have delayed my action, the more important duty of aiding distress and attending to the heart-breaking demands of scores

of applicants of every nationality must be my excuse.

"A truly neutral person or state can have neither fear nor favor for the truth, and under such unparalleled circumstances as those brought about by the war, a consular officer who might be stationed at the center of this great war vortex, will either tighten up on the technique and formalities of his position, or go outside of them, to meet in every way and as best he can, the new conditions and the pressing demands made upon him. In the midst of such extraordinary circumstances no call of duty appeared more definite to me than that of the keenest observation and accurate report as to the motives and acts of the combatants. If a neutral state cannot separate its belligerent friends and bring peace between them, it must, I feel, automatically take the position of referee, or umpire, or sink into obscurity as unequal to its role as a World Power and an influencing force upon the wider welfare of mankind.

"There should be no German, French, Belgian, or English in America at such a moment as this. There should not be, but unfortunately there are. We have over twenty millions of citizens of German blood in our country, even though their consan-

guinity dates from the days of the colonization of Pennsylvania, at a time when the English language was known in that territory only in official circles. Germanic source or blood constitutes more than one-fifth of the present composite body of America, almost one-fourth against one-eighth or less of English.

"Must the accident of blood and of language bar these people, with their undying memories for the Fatherland, from a square deal? There is no German blood in my veins and I thank God I am an American, but I should lose my pride of race if I thought the American national spirit of fair play were dead. Even if the operation of international law, which indicates the rights and duties of belligerents and neutrals, permit or force us to become allies of the Allies in the matter of supplying them with men and vast supplies of munitions of war; (to say nothing of reservists, I am advised that some three thousand of the Canadian troops in England now are American boys); even if this be true, which is not denied, it is no less the duty of the United States to umpire the game, standing out fearlessly for the exposition of the truth and the administration of justice.

"In withdrawing from the service at this

time, and under the circumstances, I may be permitted to state once more and specifically that I regard it as the special duty and privilege of a neutral country, through its representatives and otherwise, in any manner fairly open to it, to ascertain the truth and facts in a great human epoch-making event like the present war; not alone to ascertain the truth, but to record it for the benefit of history and the final accounting which must be rendered to mankind—an accounting which in all probability must eventually be made through the mediation of that same neutral country, conferring upon it the greatest privilege and moral responsibility, perhaps, in the history of nations.

"The instruction seems gratuitous and trivial in view of the importance of the subject, and the opportunity afforded you, of having a disinterested bystander on the spot, who might learn, if not the truth, at least certain aspects of the truth, concerning the extreme and appalling charges laid at the door of a people so intimately and sentimentally connected with America as are the Germans, by others of equal intimate relationship.

"I cannot be alone in the thought that the most important consideration in our present

national life is to know the truth, and as much of the truth as we can possibly learn on the subject of this war, and first and primarily of its causes and beginnings. If I may be the instrument, even in the smallest degree, of supplying or setting into proper alignment only a few phases of this vast and chaotic panorama in which the hearts and souls of millions of our fellow countrymen are involved, almost equally with the actual participants, my withdrawal from the service for such purpose will indeed be a small sacrifice."

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul (Resigned).

GERMANY'S RISE AND ENGLAND'S DECLINE

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE, GERMANY,
October 29, 1914.

TO THE HONORABLE,
THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Sir:—

I have the honor to present the following for your consideration.

I think it the duty of every person who feels he can throw light upon the ethics and meaning of the present great war to come forward and speak; and I hope that my observations may be of help to the government in determining its attitude in the future.

For my part I am a great lover of France—the Lafayette monument in Paris, erected upon my initiative, and the high order of the Legion of Honor decoration which has been conferred upon me will attest to that. My blood and ancestry are English. I have lived in France, in England and in Germany. I think my viewpoint is clear and that I am fair and unprejudiced. I suppose it is of little

importance how I may look at this titanic human convulsion; but I have seen the thing coming on for years, events to which mankind runs forward but which occasion surprise and wonder when they are realized.

You may recall my interview in the Houston *Chronicle* of July 23, 1912, sent to the Department at that time and resulting in my transfer from Germany to Sheffield, England. I repeat it in part, here:—

"Germany is today the most efficient nation, economically, on the globe. Today Germany is second only to England as an exporter of manufactured goods, the United States ranking third. Within five years Germany will pass Great Britain in this respect and lead the nations of the world. The German policy is one of peaceful development of domestic and foreign trade; Germany does not seek offense nor seek occasion to give offense. But Germany is determined henceforth to take a leading position among the world powers in the adjustment of all international issues, and is determined, especially, to press her industrial and commercial development to first rank among the nations, regardless of any opposition which may be aroused by this course in any quarter of the globe.

"When the day comes that Germany passes Great Britain in the exportation of manufactured products, British resentment will perhaps precipitate an armed conflict between these two great nations. The only factor which, in my opinion, may prevent it, is the rapidly increasing socialistic sentiment of both peoples. Socialism stands opposed to war. Great Britain, during the next few years, is going to be socialized to an extent that will virtually revolutionize the British government. The socialists are very numerous and influential in Germany. It is possible, perhaps probable, that the doctrinal opposition to war of the socialists in Germany and Great Britain may prevent the armed conflict toward which so many observers in both countries, and elsewhere throughout the world, have been looking forward fearfully during recent years.

"There is no general wish for war in Germany; war discussion there is confined almost wholly to army officers, who naturally consider a survey of what is ahead as in line with their calling, just as they do in France, Russia, Japan, and other countries. Foreign brokers indulge in some war talk, but the substantial interests of Germany—manufacturing, educational, professional—do not

want war; they deplore the possibility of it, but will not on that account be deterred from pressing Germany's claim for pre-eminence in the peaceful competitions of the world as rapidly as her people can make that claim good. Most of the talk of war I hear in Germany is developed by the war speculations of newspapers from across the English Channel."

I have thought that Germany's unchecked and gradual commercial conquest of England might in some way affect a revolution of the industrial classes of England and thus bring on war, rather than that it would come as it has. I believe the broad statement may be made now, in full truth, that Germany, the youngest nation amongst the great powers, and even still in infancy—at the commencement of its career—has, to all practical purposes, attained the position of conqueror and leader of the world from the standpoint of the present economic ideals and standards of mankind. I do not think there is the slightest doubt of this. I have been in one of the greatest typical industrial centers of England for two years and I have been in the same comparative centers in Germany for six years, and one would need to be blind, indeed, to fail to see conclusive evidence of what I state.

In my judgment, Germany has fairly and definitely won her laurels; and the least important of her national institutions, in this respect, is her military establishment, the thing by which, I think, we falsely judge her at this moment, when she finds herself compelled to test its efficiency, to put it to performance, in holding that which she has gained through the arts of peace, and maintaining and preserving it for civilization.

It may be illuminating to take the recent explanations of the British manufacturing world for the placing of English orders for locomotives in Berlin; viz., that their factories, or works, were filled with orders and they could not, therefore, make delivery in the time necessary to meet the requirements. That was the claim. I happen to know the facts and they are that many of these factories were not at all fully occupied, at the time. More particularly, however, all of them were suffering from arrested development. In other words, they were operating on the basis of several decades back, and had not the initiative to keep abreast of their German competitors in the way of expansion, as, according to my observation, is the case with the English manufacturer generally. The

grandfather's method of doing business there and of meeting the demands of the world is no fiction, but a deadening reality.

During the years 1912 and 1913, in many respects the most prosperous England has ever experienced, commercially, her emigration was the most pronounced and extensive in her history. To a very large extent the English workman had abandoned hope of any betterment in his own country; and the continuous desertion of the mother country by high class mechanics, going to Canada and the colonies, was growing daily more and more embarrassing in the way of maintaining efficiency of workmanship. In the period of Germany's phenomenal advancement in manufacturing and agriculture in the past thirty years, many millions of acres of agricultural land in England have reverted to the sheep range and hunting park. England, who had become dependent upon the outside world for food, was becoming also more and more dependent upon Germany for the manufactured necessities of her complicated and effete civilization—for sugar, almost exclusively, for chemical products and dyestuffs used in her great textile industries, for steel and iron products, and for hundreds of different kinds of manufactured articles,

which Germany was making better and cheaper than any nation in the world.

Furthermore, England was looking to Germany as an example for her hoped-for rejuvenation and renaissance, even to the extent of seriously discussing copying her financial policy, customs tariff, and her army establishment with the introduction of enforced military service. She had already taken Germany's industrial insurance laws as a model for her own, she was slowly awakening to the wisdom of copying her scheme of technical education. A great movement was afoot to introduce a net work of waterways, similar to that of Germany; and scores of municipal delegations were visiting Germany annually with the view of improving the English cities. The wise men of England saw in all this, and in the rapidly approaching world leadership of Germany in the manufacture and sale of those goods, which, in their production pay wages to workers, an inevitable shift and transfer of the financial center of the world from London to Berlin; and, with the realization of this stupendous fact, came the forecast of the automatic loss, as well, of her place as the political and ethical center of Caucasian civilization.

By the same token that Germany had

fashioned for herself a "big stick," in the way of her army, to defend herself against the weed-like growth and threatened expansion of Russia, resulting in her being regarded as the very apotheosis of militarism, England, for her own purposes, had also built her "Big Stick"—her navy—a far greater exhibition of armament than the German war machine.

One is in as bad a position as the other from the standpoint of militarism—excepting that with Germany we have militarism at home and efficiency, while with England, it is militarism of the sea, imperialism and growing inefficiency.

No people have felt this more keenly than the English statesmen. They have gravely realized that the last and only possible chance for England to retain her position before the world, politically and economically, for another generation, lay in the checking of Germany's progress in the arts of peace. To meet and pass her in the legitimate operations of industrial competition was impossible; they saw plainly that England was hopelessly outclassed in this field. A way out was found in the combination with Russia and France, who were racial antagonists and military competitors of Germany, and not serious

commercial rivals. By joining these states in the enterprise of war, England has moved to regain her position as manufacturer and banker for the world.

In my judgment, the violation of Belgian neutrality by Germany as the reason for England's declaration of war is a sentimental subterfuge, sounding well for English chivalry before the world, but meaning, from the beginning, suicide and death to poor Belgium. The whole Belgian situation has proved a fortuitous circumstance for England, the moral value of which has counted enormously for her and her allies.

The German, however, is too naive to resort to this sort of politics, too direct and simple to lie. He has much to learn, in diplomacy. Nevertheless, honesty is something, and, in the end, sometimes prevails.

I would not assert that England has willfully sought the present favorable moment for her cause. It came, nevertheless, and found her as well prepared as she could ever be, with the combined armies of France and Russia on her side; and, because of a conscious or subconscious knowledge that here was her final opportunity, it became inevitable that she should declare war on Germany. I do not think there was any more possibility

of avoiding this than to prevent a collision between two locomotives headed for each other under full speed on the same track.

The merits of the case will rest finally upon the question as to which is the superior civilization, that of Germany or that of England—or better, which offers the most to mankind. To the American, who judges modern Germany by the immigrant who settled in Illinois or Iowa forty or fifty years ago and did the cobbling and blacksmithing for the town, the matter is quickly determined, but for those who have witnessed the phenomenal development of the German people and nation during the last twenty years, the thing presents itself in an altogether different light. And to him who has had the opportunity to study the conditions in England today in comparison with the conditions in Germany—economic, moral and political—as I have had, the question passes out of the field of academic discussion. The one is moribund and self-sufficient, the other filled with the energy of youth, confidence and hope. A thousand years of English civilization and social endeavor, with perhaps the best and ablest men in the world at the helm, arrays an almshouse, pauper-fed spirit against the highest expression of socialistic co-opera-

tion the world has heretofore known. I will say, too, that as there is more prosperity, order, sanitation, and contentment in Germany than there is in England, there is likewise more liberty and individual freedom than critics of Germany admit. Men of sense soon learn that police regulations intended for the comfort and protection of the citizen are no more an abridgment of one's liberty than is the rule of the camp that each man shall fold his own blanket.

By sheer force in numbers of her opponents, coupled with the unparalleled Navyism of England, Germany may temporarily lose in this struggle for her existence and a place in the sun. But if she does lose, it will be the same old conquest of conservatism and reaction against the demonstrated progress and betterment of the world. Sad and unhappy as the surrender of her position as leader amongst the organized states of the world might be for England and to us, it would come as the result of administrative impotence and lack of initiative in her adjustment to the economic and sociological ideals of the day. By her diplomacy, which has tied her up with forces passe, on the one hand, and interests undeveloped and unplumbed, on the other, she is endeavoring to hold that which,

according to those rules of the game appealing to fair men, she has truly and fairly lost.

I believe that I am right, and while the appearances seem to be against Germany at present, her success, in my judgment, will sound a great advance in the world of progress and the enlightenment of mankind.

It is my purpose to send you from time to time, as I have opportunity to put my observations into shape, reports on the phases of Germany's diplomatic encirclement and isolation, the international crime of surrounding this state, and organizing against her a combination of hostile forces that spelled war from its very inception. I shall report on the much misunderstood subject of German Culture, of its real significance and importance to the world; on the matter of German militarism as against a form of armament far more dangerous to international peace—a navyism that demands a standard equal to that of the two next greatest naval powers of the world.

It is an easy thing for the American, with his sporting instinct, to say of England: "I should like to see her whipped for once." But this would mean a new and violent shift in the political status of the world. It would be like an excision of the vermiform appendix

of civilization, so to speak, which might easily threaten the life of the patient. For with the downfall of this age-long leader of human thought and action the knell of the Saxon would indeed be sounded. We occupy no light position. Truth, intellect, science, progress, and justice, perhaps, in the abstract, are on the side of Germany, yet, sentiment, tradition and ethics seem to be with the Saxon. What I may say or write is not done with a view to exercising an influence on your neutrality, it is done in a spirit of full justice, and, in large degree, against my feelings and sentimental inclinations.

I see in German dominance a phenomenon of the great inscrutable Infinite, which, with the clanking juggernaut wheels of Change and Progress, advances toward freedom and light through death and pain and travail. The compensation to mankind must be salutary, and may be, beyond anything that has occurred since the crucifixion. I will close this dispatch by quoting a letter from the great English historian, Carlyle, written in 1870:

"I believe the Prussians will certainly keep for Germany what of Elsass and Lorraine is still German, or can be expected to *re-become* such, and withal that the whole world cannot

forbid them to do it and that Heaven will not (nor I). Alone of nations Prussia seems still to understand something of the art of governing and of fighting enemies to said art. Germany, from of old, has been the peaceablest, most pious, and in the end most valiant and terrible of nations. Germany ought to be president of Europe, and will again, it seems, be tried with that office for another five centuries or so."

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul (Resigned).

DIPLOMACY'S ISOLATION OF GERMANY

American Consulate,
Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany.

The Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:—

I have the honor to present the following brief analysis of the enforced diplomatic isolation of Germany and her encirclement by a combined military establishment four times greater in magnitude than her own:

When Kaiser Wilhelm sent his famous telegram to President Kruger of the Boer republic, I believe the present war was forecast, if not assured. This is the telegram: "I express my sincere congratulations that, supported by your people, and without appealing for the help of friendly Powers, you have succeeded, by your own energetic action, against armed bands which invaded your country as disturbers of the peace, and have thus been enabled to restore peace and safe-

guard the independence of the country from attack from outside." That was in 1896. When the Boer War came on shortly after, King Edward found the French crying, "Vive Kruger!" "To death with the English!" "A mort and a bas l'Edouard!" and the same sentiment more or less in Germany, more, in fact, as Germany was growing and France was marking time. These conditions convinced Edward that the "Splendid Isolation" policy of Salisbury might be surrendered for a while, and he chose the Kaiser as his successor in this role. England's isolation, however, was voluntary. The present isolation of Germany was forced upon her through diplomatic strategy, designated by the Germans, conspiracy.

England's mastery of the diplomatic world is historic. It is confirmed by the present line-up of the European powers against Germany—accomplished, as leading Englishmen assert, at some sacrifice of soul and future serenity. The English do not close their eyes to the incongruity of their strange compact with Russia, nor to their unique alliance with France—both nations her ancient and classic enemies. The formation of this alien combination by the emissaries of Edward VII—the consummation of this unprecedented

diplomatic trade—really precipitated what it was intended to guard against, for the antagonistic impulse created by it led directly to the opening of hostilities in the Armageddon raging the world today, and which threatens to destroy civilization before it is finished.

What was the direct and inevitable result of the combination? To check the growth, by minimizing the power, of a vigorous and successful commercial rival. To encompass Germany from two sides, and patrol it from the offing. How does England expect to close the account with Russia, Japan and France in case she is victorious? Suppose Japan demands the further reward for her participation in this affair, of Hong Kong, and Russia lays her hands on Persia and India. Germany's defeat, as well as her success, is likely to spell disaster for England.

It is not the militarism of Germany that is the cause of the war. On the contrary, it is the diplomacy of Lord Lansdowne and Delcasse in operation, the working out of their compact to put the lid on and check a great and progressive rival—a people whose success, whose marvelous development and unparalleled advancement, is due to plodding, industrious effort, to new and up-to-date adaptations of their social forces to the present

day economic ideals of mankind. To mislead the world, to deceive herself, in fact, England has brought into the premise of this possibly last chapter of her greatness the justification of militarism, autocracy and the violation of Belgian neutrality. She would present a nobler figure to the world if she would tell the truth.

It is a peculiar philosophy that will condemn efficiency, be it either in the making of cotton goods or cannon. If the German army is accredited with being the best in the world, it must be charged to those Teutonic qualities which have also counted for so much of the world's progress in the pursuits of peace, and not in any sense to a military spirit.

Germany is said to have led in the preparation for war. This is hardly true. Russia's standing army in times of peace is more than double that of Germany's in numbers; that is, 1,500,000 men against 672,000.* Her annual military budget exceeds Germany's by $36,000,000. But that is not all. Menacing her on the front, or, at least, if not menacing her, existing just the same, stood France with an army of 620,000 men, and an army of 620,000 for France, with her population of 40,000,000 souls, is equivalent to an army of

* Data in this chapter is all taken from Whitaker's Almanac, London, 1915.

1,085,000 men for Germany. In other words, the military establishment of France alone, population for population, is quite 40 per cent greater than that of Germany.

We neutrals should try to be fair, and not be governed by our prejudices and sentiments. We cannot close our eyes to facts. Russia, with a peace footing army more than 100 per cent larger than that of the Kaiser's, on the one hand, and France with a peace footing army 40 per cent (in proportion to population) greater on the other, both avowed racial and military competitors of the German, made it the duty of the Kaiser, and undoubtedly his very highest duty, to prepare, and hold himself always prepared for the impending, if not inevitable assault.

I can see it in no other light than that this was Germany's contract to civilization, to preserve herself, her nationality and her culture against the combination of Russia and France, and a big enough contract it was. She was in a most heroic position before the war, facing front and back the combined peace footing armies of Russia and France of 2,100,000 men—three to one against her 672,000 men. It will be seen that with one-third the number of men and half the money she has succeeded in maintaining the peace

of central Europe for a period of forty-five years.

So there you have the situation—the big and simple analysis of the German militarism, "mailed fist" and "war lordism," which we have heard so much about. I give peace footing figures only, here, as all others are speculative and uncertain. I have already, in a previous connection, directed attention to the fact that the American regular army, which is one-tenth the size of Germany's, costs us to maintain it just an even one-half the amount that Germany spends on her whole army establishment. While the American people have neither sympathy nor much respect for militarism, at home or abroad, they will, nevertheless, agree that Germany would have presented the aspect of a poltroon had she not done exactly what she has done, or even more.

It is probable, judging from the past forty-five years, that Germany, of all the great powers, the only one to keep the peace—the only nation that has not been at war—would have been able to maintain this condition indefinitely and pursue her destiny in comparative quietude and neighborliness with France and Russia, had continental Europe been left alone. But along about 1898,

English diplomacy, in the form of "Balance of Power," "Sphere of Influence," "Holding His Own," appears in Paris and Petersburg, and the isolation of Germany is underwritten and sealed—fixed and financed. Shortly, the Kaiser sees this vast encircling force, this formidable and hostile coalescence, taking on another 160,000 men of arms and an additional annual war fund against him of $150,000,000. It has seemed to men like myself, and to American army officers who have spent a year or two at such places as Hanover and Berlin, that whatever might happen, Germany could, after all, defend herself, against the whole of Europe. Neither Italy nor Austria count for much in this great line-up of forces. Austria has her hands full with the Balkans and Italy has, so far, stayed out of it.

Now why this isolation and smothering policy of England against Germany? Wars don't begin with the firing of the first gun; murder is not committed on the spot. Both must have their causes, their premeditations and preparations. They spring from and course along psychological grounds. When this entente had been adjusted by the diplomatic cabinets of London, Paris and St. Petersburg, against the German Michael,

and a standing peace footing army of 2,260,000 men in Russia, France and England surrounded him, English diplomacy returned to its island home and awaited results.

Right here, I think, is where it was incumbent upon England to fling out a declaration to the world that she would be no party to the protection of Servia from what many people consider to be a just and proper punishment or, if her underwriting with the Czar made this impossible, then the contrary, that she would fight, too, if Germany went to war with her continental partners. Unfortunately, she did neither. Russia and France knew that England must fight and that she had dickered with them for this very occasion. It is my belief that time and history will place the blame for the war right here, on the English alliance with Russia. England refused—she could not give the assurance to Germany that she would keep out of the war if the neutrality of Belgium was respected. In his dispatch to Ambassador Goshen, at Berlin, August 1st, Sir Edward Grey said he could not give Germany the promise that England would remain neutral on that condition alone—and on August 4th, to Sir Francis Villiers, his British Majesty's minister to Brussels, a

peremptory order was communicated to the Belgian government in which England demanded (expected) that Belgium would resist by any means in its power the demand of Germany to cross her frontiers, and that his British Majesty's government would support it in such resistance.

So we have poor Belgium between the devil and the deep sea; facing a dilemma which could be solved only by her sympathies and prejudices. Belgium is an abomination of desolation. From the points where the promised support of England and France met the German advance—say at Dinant and in Flanders—it is a nauseating nothingness. Where the support was not in evidence she still breathes, where it was given there is death. And still the Belgians wait daily in Brussels and the villages for the coming of the English—for the entry of the French and Russians. But I do not think, even while we weep for Belgium, and stand aghast over her condition, the two and a quarter millions of armed and trained soldiers, the bristling circle of steel, placed around the frontiers of Germany as the result of the supposedly clever work of Lord Lansdowne and his diplomatic confreres, Delcasse and Cambon, should be forgotten. That was the monster

blunder of modern diplomacy. Poor France, once again her sons bleed and die for the ambitions of little men.

Here you have four great powers of Europe fighting for world leadership, to which they think they are all entitled. Russia should wait—her time will come. France must be satisfied, for her day is past. But for England, still the able and clever diplomatic leader of the nations, the fight is hers. Her instruments are the mythical "Balance of Power," "Spheres of Influence," and "Isolation" of her competitor.

It would take seventy years for Germany to become as thickly settled as Belgium, with her normal increase of population, and several decades to reach the same ratio as Holland. The assumption that she needs additional territory for her sons and daughters is an error. Her increase in population, as a matter of fact, does not keep pace with her progress in industry, by nearly 100 per cent. It is a punishable offense to preach emigration in Germany. (Our American Mormon missionaries will testify to this.) Furthermore, she herself, under official control, assists the temporary annual immigration to her fields, mines and public works, of not less than a million laborers—from the provinces of Russia

and from Italy. In addition to this, three million female German workers are engaged in her fields and gardens during the summer months. With her intensive agriculture, her tremendous industrial demands, she could absorb the entire population of England, and then be no more thickly populated than Holland; and if she took, in addition to this, the population of France, she would have but about the same number of inhabitants to the square mile as Belgium. Let the legend that Germany requires, must have, more room for her increasing people, be dismissed. That is buncombe and belongs to the Balance of Power series of unfounded assumptions. Statistics prove that Germany requires immigrants not emigrants. She was *isolated* by her neighbors, not because of a fear of her ambition for physical expansion, but because her new spirit of nationalism compelled her to take a political position as a World Power, in accordance with her undisputed championship in the real pursuits of modern life: science, economics, education and social and civic progress; and right here is where it seems to me the miscalculation of Germany's opponents has been made, and where they will fail, even as the church failed to suppress and isolate Martin Luther, and the slavery

sentiment of America miscarried in its efforts to bottle the abolitionists and Abraham Lincoln.

The misconception of the real movement in Germany is astonishing. The thought has grown up throughout the world that the Kaiser, with a standing army of little more than a quarter the size of that of those *cordialled* against him, has been dreaming of going out to annex the rest of Europe. Germany's dreams of conquest were in the humanitarian fields of commerce, of applied sciences and beautiful cities, of transportation and the liberal arts; and if she is to be beaten down, the real spoliation of the war will be here, and not over the face of Belgium, nor in France, nor in Poland, nor even in Sussex, Surrey or the West Riding of Yorkshire. Whatever happens in these places can have no final effect upon the result, because Germany's chief progress is an intellectual one, and something that is impossible of isolation, blockade or bayonet charge.

Germany turns out the biggest ocean liner, two, three, of them. England builds the biggest battleship—dreadnaught. The policy of German isolation must extend to the sea as well as the land. Germany's foreign trade increases and approaches that of England at terrific speed. She controls the markets of

South America, of the near and far East. She competes successfully with England in Sheffield, Manchester and London; and as her foreign trade assumes a magnitude certain soon to surpass that of her island rival she rushes her naval construction, also, correspondingly. Now, who was really prepared for this war? England, with the combined navies of France, Russia, Japan, and a peace footing army of 2,260,000 men at her command, or Germany, with her regular army of 672,000 men, her untried navy and her obligations to hard-pressed Austria on her hands? Here you have what we may call the diplomatic layout of the war game, its actual frame-up. But I think the combination will fail because of its miscalculation of the spirit of the German people. Truly there is but one thing that would precipitate a revolution or uprising in Germany—one thing only—and that would be a weakening of the Emperor or government in the matter of defense or prosecution of the war. Let there be no mistake, Germany certainly will not grow weary. If the world ever witnessed an example of the spirit of all for one and one for all in action, it may see it now in the people of the imperial, confederated states of the German nation.

The cause of the war then, might justly be laid at the feet of Lord Lansdowne, Edward VII, Paul Cambon and M. Delcasse, with Sir Edward Grey, that astute and masterly head of the British Foreign Office and diplomatic leader of the world, as regisseur of the performance. Isolation, that was the plan. To place Germany by herself. To keep her in the shade—out of the sun of international politics. To turn the world loose upon her, through manufactured alarm and misdirected hatred. This arrangement to either suppress or destroy the one nation which has become a model of civic and social advancement, should be exposed and understood, and if it is, the American people will not hesitate to level the finger of admonition at England and France for their part in it.

I say all of this with reluctance and mortification, for I love both England and France. I believe they are engaged in a hopeless, if not, indeed, a wicked cause, measured both by the sacrifice and woes they bring upon themselves, and their effort to check the progress of the world by laying low its chief and most brilliant exponent.

I have wept with the mothers and wives of the best young blood of England. I have searched the battlefields for the torn bodies

of cultured and beloved scions of the first families of France, even to the descendant of our beloved Lafayette. I have aided in the recovery of the wrecked remains of lost and killed sons of the Fatherland, and with all my love of France, my attachments to England, I must confess I could only see in it all the fruition of the *diplomatic* scheme of enforced German isolation, which could only be likened to an imbecile undertaking to control the tides of the sea or the lightning flashes of the firmament.

I regard the endeavor to isolate Germany, effectually, to be as futile as an attempt to place the lid upon Vesuvius.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul (Resigned).

SEA VS. LAND MILITARISM

American Consulate,
Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany.

To the Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:—

I have the honor to submit the following facts and comments upon the subject of militarism of the sea and land, as expressed in the respective armaments of England and Germany:

Over six million acres of our cotton lands are put out of commission as a first material tribute to "militarism"—but militarism of the sea—which has closed the market for some three million bales of our standard southern crop. Our second tribute is a matter of $70,000,000 worth of copper, $25,000,000 worth of lard, and a score of other things which our good people raise or coax from the earth, to exchange for German chemicals, dye stuffs, toys, cloths, paper, glass, etc. Our export trade to Germany, Austria and Russia, now practically cut off from our markets

through militarism—of the sea principally—is a matter of some seven hundred million dollars.

England, the chief exponent of militarism of the sea, had ready and building, at the commencement of the war, six hundred and seventy-eight war vessels. Her expenditures for 1914–15 were to amount to $257,750,000, as a militarist-naval tax on the people of Great Britain, required for the maintenance of the Royal Navy. The guns of the Queen Elizabeth super-dreadnaught fire a projectile of 1,950 pounds, and a broadside is a mere matter of eight tons of solid steel. The personnel of the British Navy is 151,000 men. It was this form of militarism that tore Copenhagen and Alexandria to pieces—that bombarded and burned our own Capitol and Congressional Library, at Washington. It is the Royal British Navy that made the subjugation of neutral and smaller states and peoples, all over the world, a fact. England's greatness is synonymous with the supremacy of her navy; and its greatness and efficiency, no doubt, have saved her many a war. It is a fighting machine pure and simple. It was created for the purpose of attack, essentially. It is not what one would designate as the sword of defense of the

gentleman, but the weapon of the aggressor and super-power.

I know that the personnel of the navies of the world, and that of England, especially, combine the finest, bravest, and most honorable men in existence. But, as between militarism of the sea and militarism of the land, the least formidable and dangerous to peace, if not the most romantic, is the latter. The one is an away-from-home, interfering, intimidating and marauding affair, the other is a hearthstone, home defense institution.

Being, like yourself, Mr. Secretary, neither a military man nor a naval expert, it seems to me this is a fair, unprejudiced view of the matter. There has always been as great an activity amongst the arms and armament makers of Birmingham and Sheffield, as there has at Essen, or Liege. In this respect there has been no difference excepting that a slab of armour plate or a 15-inch naval gun never looks as dangerous as a Liege pistol, a Colt's revolver, or a machine gun.

I am convinced that the objection of the American people to the so-called German militarism is not to the thing itself, but to its earnestness and efficiency, the undoubted business-like aspect of the German army in times of peace, to say nothing of it when

the nation is armed. But the German army, like the German transatlantic liners, German chemical works, German technical schools, German science, German industrial insurance, German municipal government, or German anything, excepting diplomacy, would not be the German army at all if it did not take itself seriously and strive for perfection there as well as elsewhere. Thoroughness is the one prime German characteristic, and though these people might have the best of everything else in the world and not excite fear and distrust, so soon as the world realizes or thinks the German excels in its war installation, it cries militarism, mailed fist, autocracy, and indulges in a lot of other epithets which mean nothing at all more than that it is willing to be beaten in all the genuinely big things of life, but in this it doesn't want to play.

America has regarded the German regular army from the only standpoint it could judge any standing army, that is, from a comparative point of view, from the troops at Fort Sheridan, Fort Leavenworth, or the Texas frontier—a group of outcasts, half criminals, and ne'er-do-wells. This is wrong. The German army is nothing more than a per-

fected militia—the soldiers are citizen soldiers. Instead of serving two weeks a year in the field, and one or two nights a week in the army, they serve one or two years, as the case may be, and then return to their civil occupations, their places being filled by new men from year to year, as the youth of Germany comes to military age.

In a previous letter I stated that the German military establishment was one of the least important expressions of its national life. This is not quite true, because its army is essentially its Sandow, jiu-jitsu, morning exercise scheme. It was old Friedrich Ludwig Jahn, the father of the Turners, to whom a statue stands in the city of Freiburg, who met the German spirit for regimented physical exercise sixty or seventy years ago, and organized the great Turner Bund. Von Moltke, Bismarck and Kaiser Wilhelm I used that spirit out of which to create the German army. It was originally figured out as a plan to bring forth a superior physical race. In the present utilitarian age this necessity for co-operated effort in the German character, even in the most excellent practice of physical culture, became the soul and spirit of the imperial German army. So, as you yourself have seen, the youth of

Germany, sons of the idle rich as well as the unidle rich, princes of the royal families as well as the yokels of the field, all but criminals (who automatically lose their rights to enter the army) and inefficients, have been regimented and trained to march, to sing, to play, to put the shot, to do the Marathon and goose step, to rise in the morning at six o'clock and get to bed at ten, to get off into the fields and sunshine, and dig in the sand, to swim, to jump, to ride, to eat wholesome food, to keep clean, and to obey, to work together as one man, and incidentally learn to shoot. This has been the Kaiser's crime, that is the militarism you have been afraid of; and do you know that this splendid and effective school of German manhood and efficiency, of health and virility, has cost the German nation just once again the price of maintaining our American army, which contains but one-tenth the number of men enrolled in the peace footing army of Germany? (See Whitaker's Almanac, 1915, page 105).

During my seven and a half years of service as consul, in Germany, I have been a butt for inquiry from hundreds of prospective emigrants to America, Canada and Brazil. In this time I have never known

personally, nor have I ever heard of a single instance of a young German wishing to leave his country to avoid military service. I have personally known hundreds who have striven to pass their gymnasium or high school examinations in order to limit their period of service to one year. Military service has accomplished this for Germany, in addition to improving its health and efficiency: it has implanted into the minds of its citizens a sense of duty to the state quite inconceivable to the American or British mind—it has made a living reality of the motto of the Prince of Wales: "*Ich dien.*" This, of course, is the modern Germany you have heard of. What it was prior to 1870, when it was composed of a score or more of fusty sleepy kingdoms and principalities, and what I believe the Allies think it should be now, is quite a different thing. "I serve," is the spirit of Germany today, in peace, and it is more than that in war—it is a fetish. And the greatest servant of all is the Kaiser, typifying in his character, more than all else he has been charged or accredited with, the spirit and ideals of the nation. This is the mysterious spirit of the Hive, the Zeitgeist, and national transcendentalism of the German people. Call it

militarism, humanism, barbarism or what not, in my judgment it is and has been for the past twenty years the one great and promising phenomenon of civilization, the shining hope and assurance of progress of mankind.

England has set herself the task of crushing German militarism, of redeeming christianity and Russianizing Eastern Europe. Association with the German individual or with a detached group of German individuals would make it seem possible, if not easy. But I am afraid England does not fully appreciate the contract she has taken on. Her militarism of the sea should protect her great foreign trade and make her secure in her colonies, barring, of course, the possibility of her eventual defeat by the Germans at sea. A full and complete victory of German arms in Europe, and even in England, would leave the naval question unsettled, because the British Empire would still be at home in Canada, in Australia or in India, and it could raid the commerce of the conqueror from the various bases, for an indefinite period. Thus would be brought home to the world the real importance and fatal significance of militarism of the sea, an instrument infinitely more opposed to inter-

national peace than any strictly military organization could be.

But Germany did not purpose remaining at home, either. One of her new national expressions was that of international industrial and economic supremacy. A few years only would have seen her the mistress of the world in the matter of foreign trade and merchant marine. This was an inevitable fact and it was this that forced the rushing of her naval construction program—to be in a position to protect her enormous and preponderating commerce against her defeated commercial rivals. England has looked with contempt, distrust and indignation upon Germany for her seeming effort to compete with her for the position of policeman of the sea, and every new German battleship has raised the war scare in England and fixed the determination there, faster than ever, to "Hold Her Own." She would surrender the palm to Germany in industrial, economic and civic rivalry, but she would not part with the trident. That, like the Church of England, had been given by Henry VIII, and was as sacred as her money system, her weights and measures and her atrocious land ownership scheme.

This purpose to remain the master of the

sea, is all very well and noble enough. It has been the one great saving ambition of Britain, but it is not for her to cry "Mailed Fist," "Militarism," and all those fearful sounding things to the good reason and fair play sentiment of the world. If we agree with the claim that England and her supreme militarism of the sea stand for the restoration of Christianity, the suppression of vandalism, the crushing of Germany, very well—but as neutrals in this terrific cyclone of horror, we must get our proper bearings and render justice, so far as it comes to us to do so, to all sides.

Militarism of the sea means suppression of commerce in time of war. It means the suppression of our commerce. It means millions of suffering workers in the south. It means unemployment for hundreds of thousands of non-combatants all over the world. It is a part of war and it is fair, the least cruel of all forms of warfare, perhaps, because the widest in its effect. Whether we will or no, it forces the co-operation of every neutral in the world. It makes us allies of the big tonnage, right or wrong. It is the real big stick Mr. Roosevelt was wont to talk about so much. If America sees war ahead with Japan, England or Germany, let

her go to the navy program. No nation can fight and upset the world without a navy, but it is a certainty, if the present war results in disarmament, and that is another moral obligation England has taken on, the dreadnaughts and submarines, the sea mines and torpedoes, will assuredly be the first to go to the scrap heap. Then what will become of India, of Egypt, of South Africa, and the new Cyprus? What will become of our own imperialism, the Philippines? Militarism from the Teutonic standpoint subjugates no people. Nor would the militarism of France or Russia have brought on the war had it not been for the big tonnage of England. Even with their vastly superior forces they would never have undertaken it, and Germany, having everything to lose, and not so much as the value of a single man to gain on the continent of Europe, would have certainly avoided it.

This is the situation, as I see it. The Kaiser worked always with the idea that with the best, if not the biggest, "big stick" in the arena of European military rivalry, he could maintain the peace, and for twenty-five years he succeeded in doing so, and now the glove is on the floor and the German nation is battling to save and prove the

efficiency of her wonderful culture to the world. Success or failure for her means international political leadership on the one hand, or practical destruction on the other. It means advance or stagnation. It means that Russian, French or English civilization, statecraft, shall be the standard of intra-social ideals and human welfare for the next hundred years, or so. It means that and nothing else. The atrocity business, "baby killing," "militarism," "navyism," "the Kaiser," "scraps of paper," and all the other cries of the Powers, do not enter into the merits of the contest in the slightest degree. They are mere incidents of something so vastly more important to us that they will be forgotten in the great onrush of events to the goal toward which mankind is inevitably and irresistibly driven. Let us get beyond the diverting incidentals to the main issue.

England would make this our fight as well as hers. In fact, with her control of the sea, we automatically become one of her principal allies. She would make us a party to the attempted isolation of Germany. She would have us commit ourselves to militarism of the sea as against militarism of the land; she would have us join her in her effort to turn back the clock of destiny, and aid her in

retaining the pennant of leadership which is slipping from her mast. We have no naval competition with England; ours would be with Japan, if with any power, and, besides, we have a goodly hostage both for her respect of the Monroe Doctrine and for her general good behavior in Canada. But the mysteries of the foreign office of England are wide and deep. Supposing they disclosed an alliance with the sons of the Mikado against us in case of war with Japan?

We witnessed a year ago a combination of the British and German governments to the disadvantage of our Exposition at San Francisco, much to our surprise and chagrin. Just now this is a very sore point with the German foreign office. For they were told by England: "stay with us in this matter and we will bring about a readjustment of the Panama Canal tolls." Perhaps the Hay-Pauncefote scrap of paper would be patched together. And it was so, much to our credit. But the militarism of Japan, the militarism of England, or of the Kaiser, could no more affect us than the militarism of Russia, without the introduction of militarism of the sea. Germany and England were much more intimately connected before the war than is the United States and England. England

was Germany's best customer, and Germany was England's best customer, in trade. They are connected by ties of blood relationship, marriage, quick transportation and a thousand industrial interests, and yet England turned her naval ally, Japan, loose upon Germany in the Pacific.

So, in this moral support and sympathy business—and God forbid we should go any further—it behooves the American people not to be carried away by every clap trap, holier than thou talk, on the part of any one of the belligerents, of England, Germany, France or Russia. None of them wanted the war—unless it was Austria in her purpose to punish the assassins of her Archduke, and Russia, in her thousand year ambition to expand to the south and west, finding her opportunity in a powerful combination with France and England against Europe's one bulwark against her encroachment—Germany.

Let us give the Kaiser and so-called German militarism a square deal. If we are to umpire the game, let us, at least, balance our prejudices and sympathies and keep an open mind. Militarism is militarism, whether on land or sea. If part goes all must go. And in the great world family of nations, secret or open,

offensive and defensive, alliances should be regarded as an international crime.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul (Resigned).

CERTAIN ASPECTS OF GERMAN CULTURE

American Consulate,
Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany.

To the Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:—

I have the honor to submit the following observations on certain points and phases of the present somewhat mooted question of German culture:

The hard sound of C does not exist in the German language. Its letters have only one sound and words are pronounced as they are spelled. A spade is called a spade in Germany—a thimble is a hat for the finger, or *Fingerhut*, and a telephone is a far-speaker, or *Fernsprecher*. So, very naturally, in this land of fiction, fable and song, and above all, of truth, culture could be nothing else than *Kultur*. It is not likely that the world will lapse into complete forgetfulness of the invention of printing at Mainz by Gutenberg, a

science which is at once the foundation and sub-structure of all permanent culture of the modern world, and so essential to the moral campaign now waging against the sons of Teuton—"the baby killers," as Mr. Churchill has so facetiously dubbed them. I think that gentleman must have forgotten his kindergarten, a bit of German "Kultur." He forgot, or did not know that the children of England were crying for German toys this Christmastide—that they were missing Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Hop o' My Thumb, Santa Claus, and the German Christmas tree. Every town of any size in Germany possesses, among other institutions of "Kultur," a doll hospital. All the cradle songs and lullabies, which have more than an ephemeral life, are born, too, in Germany; also sung there. It is the paradise on earth of children, Germany. No child or boy is ever flogged in a German school. She has no David Copperfields, no begging children, nor "newsboys." She has no slums, and her submerged world is a negligible and diminishing quotient.

A defense of German culture would be about as senseless an undertaking as an argument on the advantages of food as a nutriment. Nevertheless, it will be interesting to contemplate certain features of it at

this time, in their bearing on the war and the present and future state of human evolution. Viewing Culture from a certain angle I suppose God has produced no finer product on this earth than the English gentleman. He is no myth, but a splendid, shining reality, and certainly a model for mankind. The Germans have been the first people of the world to recognize this and endeavor to copy him. There can be no doubt that a large majority of the young British officers who have gone to the front were induced to do so by a chivalrous sense of duty toward their sacrificed ally, Belgium. The spiritual refinement and moral culture of the English gentleman is without equal in this world, in my judgment. This is natural, however, and the logical result of individualism, the spirit of England. Nevertheless, this is a utilitarian age, an economic-bread-and-butter-day, where suppression of self and surrender and immolation to the general good is proved to be the best, not only for the individual, but for the state and for mankind. And this proof exists today in the so-called German "Kultur"; a thing which must be judged or measured by its expression and results.

For example, of 1,000 Russian soldiers in the field, 617 can neither read nor write;

of a like number of Servians, the number of illiterate is 434; for Belgium, 93 out of 1,000 are illiterate; for France, 30; for England, 10, and for Germany, in order to find an illiterate soldier there must be 2,000 to draw from; that is, of the so-called "Huns and Barbarians," the percentage of illiteracy is one-fiftieth of one per cent. Illiteracy is also one of the things *verboten* in Germany; and its opposite, literacy, is *ueber alles*. No one has ever heard about the "cultured classes" in Germany. It is this self-named group in America and England which is very worthily seeking to reform and uplift those not in their order. In Germany the vast industrial class attends to this itself. The effective temperance movements spring from the trade and labor organizations. They make their own night schools. They claim and forward the legislation calculated for the good of the workers in all classes.

The socialists of Germany, composed largely of the foregoing group, have a matter of 5,000 local societies in the various centers of the Empire. They publish ninety daily, and several weekly newspapers, as well as a number of monthly magazines. The combined circulation of these socialist papers numbers nearly 2,000,000 daily, with advertis-

ing and subscription returns of nearly $5,000,000 a year. The principal organ of the socialists, "Vorwaerts," has a circulation of 200,000 daily.

Now, whether we have any interest in socialism or not, or whether we understand or believe in it, makes no difference. Every intelligent person knows that any political doctrine, be it socialism, republicanism, democracy or progressivism, is a philosophy, or set of principles worked out for state or government administration, and that socialism is peculiarly a proposition embracing modern and reform ideas. So, in this manner, we arrive at a fair conception of one of the principal aspects of German *Kultur*—the solid reading and economic studies of the great majority of the German industrial classes.

The German government has a Minister of Culture. He is the head of the schools of the country, the state and the municipal theatres, as well as the experimental branches of the government mines and research institutions. There are a dozen cities in Germany owning and supporting finer, more artistic, opera houses and theatres than anything that may be found in New York or London. The recently built Opera House at Cassel, a town

of 150,000 people, cost $1,250,000, and has been pronounced a much more beautiful and suitable structure for the purpose than the Opera House at Paris. It is certainly ahead of anything in the United States or England. Small towns of twenty-five or fifty thousand inhabitants possess municipal theatres that would put the playhouses of New York and Chicago to shame. These state and municipal theatres are a part of the *Kultur* and educational system of Germany. They are controlled to a certain extent by the Minister of Culture. Shakespeare for the classic, Ibsen and Maeterlinck for the modern, are played more often, and consequently find greater appreciation in Germany than in England, or Scandinavia, or elsewhere. In fact, there will be more Shakespearian reproduction in a town like Hanover than in the city of London. The scheme, of course, of state and municipal theatres is to keep the taste of the people on a bit higher plane than our vaudevilles and the music halls of England afford, and the best plays and grand operas may be seen and heard for from ten cents to two dollars, according to the purse of the attendant.

It surely is superfluous to touch upon the subject of music as an evidence of German

culture. Nearly all the great composers and masters of history were German. They have embraced the whole field of music with but one exception, and that has been our syncopated American rag. The superiority of the Salvation Army street music in England must be acknowledged, likewise. It is undoubtedly the best of its kind in the world. In Sheffield, the center of the British musical world, the Citadel Band competes with the Coldstream Guards for public concerts.

The merest outline of German culture, that is to say, culture of a German origin, would alone require many volumes. That she reigns supreme in the intellectual world is a universal acknowledgment, and this credit cannot now be taken from her, even though she is engaged with those same intellectual forces in the most terrific and disastrous war any one has ever dreamed of.

Indeed, the solidarity of the German people, apparent in the present war, is an evidence of how thoroughly their institutions have impressed them. All of her forces, intellectual, spiritual, financial and physical, are formed into the most absolute unity at this time. Her seventy million people are as one, let there be no mistake, as ONE individual, in the war. Her scientists, philosophers and

teachers are for it to a man. Her musicians, artists, authors and composers are in the trenches. Her priests and churches have unanimously blessed it. Her money is back of it to the final Pfennig. They regard the war as a struggle for the promotion of their civilization and culture, and to them, more than ever to Islam, their war is a holy one.

Every child in the German schools was requested by their teacher to prepare a Christmas box for the soldiers just before the holidays. These boxes were to contain a few sweets, some cakes, cigars and cigarettes—but particularly a letter from the donor to the unknown warrior who might receive it in the trenches. There is a bit of German system serving at once to render a sentimental moral encouragement to the men at the front and at the same time open an opportunity for even the children to participate in the war of the Fatherland. While America was sending Christmas ships to the children of Europe, including Germany, of course, literally millions of Hansels and Gretels, of Fritzes and Irmas, were preparing their gifts *für die tapfere Soldaten* in the field. And when the German arms are more than usually successful the church bells peal from

one end of the empire to the other, the cities and villages are decorated with flags, and the schools are given a half holiday, after—always after—the children have sung their national songs, "Die Wacht Am Rhein" and "Deutschland, Deutschland, Ueber Alles."

These are the children, indeed, of Gutenberg, Kepler and Kant, the future Beethovens, Mozarts and Wagners of the world. They are the young Haeckels, Hegels, Fichtes, Goethes, Schillers and Hauptmanns of science, philosophy and music. They are the Paul Ehrlichs and Robert Koches, the Mergenthalers, Froebels and Frauenhoefers (who brought the sun down to the earth through the spectrum) of tomorrow. German culture is not confined to the universities, the laboratories, nor to Weimar, Dresden and Beyreuth. It is everywhere evident in her beautiful and model cities, in her forests and fields, her modernized and sanitary workshops and factories—in the fitness of her people for labor and usefulness. The Kaiser is a bookbinder by trade, the crown prince is a carpenter.

According to Professor Cooley of Chicago, the Kingdom of Prussia contains approximately three million boys between the ages of fourteen and sixteen. Some two millions

of these are at work. They quit school and go to work for the same reason that the American boy leaves his school books on the completion of his grammar grade—to become a breadwinner and get a start in life. But when the American boy leaves school that is pretty much the end of it. The state gives his education no further thought. German culture demands a different system than this for its boys. When a boy between the ages of fourteen and eighteen leaves school to take a job, or learn a trade, he still has open to him a large number of vocational schools where he spends one or two days a week continuing his culture or general education in the technique of his chosen trade. The city of Munich, with a population of say half a million, supports over fifty such vocational or continuation schools.

Much has been said of an absence of initiative in the German owing to his surrender to the state. Nothing is less true than this. Perhaps one of the most distinct evidences of initiative is that of invention. In my career as Consul, at Hanover, a city of some industrial importance in Germany, and at Sheffield, an English industrial center of world-wide importance, the consular records

will show not less than five American patent applications submitted by German inventors in the Hanover district, as against one in the Sheffield district. My remembrance is that the ratio was as ten to one. I place it conservatively at five to one. Every man of the thousands of German soldiers today bearing the Iron Cross has a story of individual initiative to tell. The Germans possess initiative plus, more than any people I have ever seen. Frank Putnam, a brilliant student of sociology, says:

"Their initiative and culture has lifted them irresistibly upward through an adamantine crust of political officialdom toward a full measure of workable, personal liberty. It has substituted for the age-old scholastic servitude of modern minds to Greek and Latin classics, the universal, shrewd and thorough study of the earth we live on and the life of the present and tomorrow. It is giving effect, in the equitable distribution of material wealth and all that stands for, to the mighty visions of the poets and philosophers of the classic age of the German people. It has produced a people who stand and walk erect, almost without exception, who breathe deeply, who dress neatly, work long and steadily, and live with wise economy, and

who front life with supreme confidence in the future of their nation."

It is German initiative and culture that has made her cities wonders of artistic and cleanly beauty, which attract increasing multitudes of visitors, residents and students from every part of the world. It has given the city of Berlin more square yards of asphalt than any other civic center on the earth. It has excited thousands of inventions and improvements in applied science. It has placed Germany to the forefront of the nations of the earth, in the solution of those intra-social problems which seem to be the special purpose and object of organized society. It has brought her away from and above the entanglements of political government, as understood by the American mind. It has accepted the solution of the questions of human and political rights, and gone on to the practical problems of learning how to live and make the most of life. While the American and English politician and leader is fighting the windmills of the Rights of Man, the Crosses of Gold, and Crowns of Thorns, the German, with really as great a degree of personal liberty as any of us, has turned his face to the sun and is lifting, lifting himself and his state higher and

higher among the galaxy of successful peoples of the world to the position of Supernation.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul (Resigned).

ATROCITIES ON THE FIELD AND IN THE PRESS

American Consulate,
Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany.

To the Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:—

I have the honor to submit the following report touching on the subject of reprisals in the war zone of Western Europe:

One of the most remarkable things about the present war is the fact that practically every disinterested, thinking neutral, who has come into contact with the German military, either in Germany, Belgium, or France, even though ignorant of German ideals or institutions, and prejudiced against her through this ignorance, has needed but a few hours, or at most, a few days, to reverse his judgment and conviction more or less completely. Undoubtedly there are exceptions to this statement, but I myself know not a single one and I have had the privilege of meeting

many persons under these circumstances. Calumny, even though permissible on the part of a belligerent, is the meanest, and one of the most effective, weapons in warfare.

Strange enough the neutral commission which goes out to report on alleged brutalities and atrocities on the termination of a war, never or seldom sends a report. There were a number of such commissions sent from Europe to investigate the charges made against the Bulgars and the Turks at the close of the Balkan War. Their reports are still uncompleted. The same may be said of South Africa and the Boer War, and, to a very large extent, you may be sure this will be the case with respect to the conduct of the German troops, and, I dare say, the Russians and French as well.

Many of my friends in England have asked me to explain to them the origin of the reported bitterness and hatred of the Germans for England. It is this—the facility with which England has smirched the German character, from that of the Kaiser to the meanest trooper, in the eyes of the world, and especially in the eyes of those who would normally be in sympathy with him, by its prolific atrocity, brutality and bestiality stories. I am convinced that the fiery resent-

ment of the German toward England is more the result of this systematic, all-embracing world-campaign of mendacity and calumny, even than the awful fact of her rushing in to brain and destroy him at the moment when he is engaged in a life and death struggle with the Russian colossus straining to garrote him from the rear, with France, keen, purposeful and expert, seeking to rapier him from the front. Indeed, it cannot be long before the world, before America, will see and appreciate the heroic, if not superhuman, effort Germany is making for its life against this deluge and hurricane of foes.

I suppose no two journalists in America are more respected and trusted than John T. McCutcheon and Irving S. Cobb. These two gentlemen, in company with James O'Donnell Bennett, Roger Lewis and Harry Hansen, representing, respectively, the Chicago *Tribune*, *Associated Press* and the Chicago *Daily News*, were pushed into Germany rather unceremoniously, and as semi-suspects, along about the end of August. They all had a grievance against Germany, more or less, for the treatment they have experienced at the hands of the German military authorities in Belgium. Their complaint, however, was professional and not personal. They felt

that they were bottled and were afraid they could neither get out of Germany themselves, nor be able to send reports off to their papers. Cobb appeared in Aix-la-Chapelle in a butcher's leather jumper, and a pair of felt slippers. He is not a handsome man even when seen on Fifth Avenue; but when he came into the Consulate, unshaved and unwashed, for a period of ten days, he was cursing everything German from the Kaiser to the ordinary "Kannonenfutter," and he looked like a Bavarian charcoal burner. Lewis had left $900 in gold in an open suit case in the Palais Hotel in Brussels. Hansen had been on his honeymoon trip and did not know if his wife was in England or Germany. Bennett and McCutcheon were feverish in their desire to get to London. They had all left England some three weeks before to strike the trail of the Red Terror, and were on the scent of the "mad dog" of Europe.

If these colorful details seem rather paltry and trivial to introduce here, I present them as a simple preface to the very rapid conviction these gentlemen arrived at respecting Germany and her military activities—in Belgium particularly, after witnessing them, individually. Notwithstanding personal grievance, because of deprivation, discomfort and

interference by German army authorities, they retained their birthright, as real, open-minded, fair-play Americans; and, as soon as they compared notes and found all of their experience alike, they got together, alone in their room at their hotel, and wrote as briefly and as tersely as they could a joint statement refuting the English, French and Belgian circulated atrocity stories that were filling the columns of the press of the world. You will recall that I reported their experiences in some detail to you in a previous despatch. Their statement follows:

"Western Union, New York, for *Associated Press*, signed Lewis; *Ledger*, Philadelphia, Cobb; *News*, Chicago, Hansen; *Tribune*, Chicago, Bennett, McCutcheon. In spirit fairness we unite in declaring German atrocities groundless as far as we are able to observe. After spending two weeks with the German army, accompanying troops upward hundred miles, we unable to report single instance unprovoked reprisal. Also unable confirm rumors mistreatment prisoners or non-combatants. With German columns: Lande, Louvain, Brussels, Nivelles, Binche, Buissiere, Hautes-Wiherie, Merbes-le-Chateau, Solre-sur-Sambre, Beaumont, without substantiating single case wanton brutality.

"Numerous investigated rumors proved groundless. Everywhere have seen German paying for purchases, respecting property-rights of individuals, according civilians consideration.

"After battle Buissiere found Belgian women, children moving comfortably about, day after Germans captured town.

"In Merbes-le-Chateau we found one citizen killed, but unable confirm lack provocation.

"Refugees with tales atrocities unable supply direct evidence.

"Belgian Burgomaster Solre-sur-Sambre voluntarily discounted reports cruelty in surrounding country.

"Discipline German soldiers excellent as observed. No drunkenness.

"To truth these statements we pledge professional, personal word. Please repeat back last three words, care American Consul, Vaals, Holland."

These gentlemen were not of the refugee crowd that rushed out of Belgium into England and France and Holland ahead of the invading forces of Germany. They were left behind; and none of those neutrals who remained on the field, at least none I have met, have, as yet, been able to confirm the hysterical and irresponsible stories of atroci-

ties sent out of London. Donald Thompson, the Kansas war photographer of the New York *World*, who was arrested a dozen times by the German military authorities, wounded once by shrapnel, and present in thirty odd engagements, covering pretty much all of Western Belgium, said to me that he learned of no single case of brutality or unprovoked reprisal on the part of the German troops. This man was being paid a large sum of money, both by the New York *World* and the London *Daily Mail* for war photographs, and atrocity stories, as well as pictures, were at a premium. The baby with its hands cut off, and the nurse with amputated breasts were always in the town or villages just ahead of him, until, finally, these two particular atrocities reached London, in violation of all pathological laws of strangulation and bleeding to death. They have been sought for religiously by many and Bernard Shaw, who spent much time endeavoring to locate them, says that when he was finally told they had gone on to Archangel by way of the

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Note.—Since arriving in America I have met a wide-eyed guileless English lady, with the very truth shining from her face, who has assured me that this particular atrocity—the baby with its hands cut off—was living with her own mother near Blackpool, England; and a French friend with whom I have even had business relations for a period of three years tells me the child is with his aunt in Winnipeg. I am certain they both believe what they say.

Arctic Sea, he was compelled to abandon the search.

I have spent much time myself in seeking for German soldiers alleged to have been mutilated, and atrocitied by the Belgian populace. They, too, were not to be found, certainly not by me, and of the members of the Medical Association of the West Rhine Province, which met in Aix-la-Chapelle in October, I could find none who had personal knowledge of such cases. Undoubtedly most savage severities were applied on both sides and all sides, but these things cannot enter into the merits of this great struggle as a determining factor in the judgment of neutral people. War itself is the great atrocity and that is enough, God knows. The man, or men, whom history will make responsible for this war will also be responsible for Belgium. Lord Roberts raised the one sane voice against the atrocity campaign in England. He said: "Let us not forget our concentration camps and raids of fire in South Africa and what the world said about that. We have only to fight the Germans in such a way that, win or lose, they will respect us when the war is over."

The nurse-with-her-breast-cut-off-by-German-soldiers' story originated in Edinboro,

and the girl who concocted it has since been convicted by the courts of that good town. The sentence should have included a goodly number of London editors and American correspondents; but, unfortunately for the peace of mind of the world, the court fell short of convicting, for libel, of the perpetrators of the alleged crime, but rendered judgment because of the grief the girl had caused the parents of the mistreated nurse, who, strange enough, was her own sister.

England is the home of melodrama, and in view of this, and the demands of the newspaper reading public, the cheap theatre, music hall, and football millions for that kind of matter, which, to the shame of the British censor, was allowed to go uncut, the judging world must look elsewhere for the truth.

I repeat, the blue-eyed Saxon, the proud Prussian and the German people, all hate the English more for this campaign than if they were to whip them back across Belgium and the Rhine. The German officers and soldiers at the front, have only praise for the English troops for their bravery and fairness on the field of battle.

My friend, Mr. C. H. Wheeler, of the Chicago *Tribune*, came to Europe for the

purpose of fetching a thousand Belgian orphans, the harvest of the German invasion, back to open homes in America. The number was fairly modest, considering the tales of the London press and correspondents. That there were no orphans to be had, makes no difference. The world keeps merrily on devouring these noble tales of the sensation mongers of newspaper row in London. Had Mr. Wheeler gone to the East End of London, to Sheffield, Manchester, Leeds, and a few other places in England he could have brought back 10,000 waifs, victims of what may more rightly be considered the present real atrocity of the world—British industrial conditions. I proposed this to Mr. Wheeler at the time, but he said the American people would be satisfied only with war orphans—from Belgium.

Even now you see neither hungry nor freezing children in Belgium—you see many of them in Britain. There is no German Landwehr man who would not divide his last crust and ration with a Belgian woman or child. Under the German social system hunger and unclothed children do not exist. That also is *verboten*. But if there were starving and suffering children in Belgium the condition might fairly be attributed to a

state of war. In England that condition is the regular, unnoticed horror of Peace. Calloused against her own inability to correct these evils, deaf to the cries of those who wish to draw her out of the awful slough of administrative impotence, she points her finger toward the Germans and prints, in her great illustrated papers, faked pictures of them carrying Belgian babies on bloody lances.

This is the moral warfare of England, with her world cables, her world mails, and her practically universal language. This is the chivalry of warfare her Conan Doyles, Arnold Bennetts and H. G. Wells' write about, on which they make plea for American sympathy. And it is disgusting and unworthy of a great people. It is because of the foregoing facts, partly, that I feel that the American people have been stampeded in their conviction and sympathies. The war will continue long enough for the world to cool off and anathematize the real offenders—long enough for a readjustment of sympathies and sentiment—at least such as may have been based upon the "Atrocities."

It was as sure and easy for England and the Allies to capture the favorable sentiment of the world, they having the cables, mails

and press for the moment, as it was for Germany, with her military preparedness to throw the sphere of operations into the territory of her opponents. The "Atrocity" guns and "Militarism" mortars of the Allies' press have been more effective, indeed, on this side of the Atlantic, than the Krupp 42's in Belgium and France.

Some weeks ago the London *Graphic* printed a double page picture of a score or more of bridges destroyed along the river Meuse, with the caption: "The work of the German army in Belgium." The facts were that the Belgian and French pioneers had blown up every bridge from near Aix-la-Chapelle, on the German frontier, clear up the river as far as Verdun, in France, and not less than a hundred of them have been partially, if not completely, restored, already, by the German army. Military necessity

Editor's Note.—Mr. Thompson writes us: "Since arriving in America I have listened to one of Mr. Elmendorf's travel lectures, during which that gentleman threw several pictures of Liege on the screen. Amongst them was a view of the University building. Mr. Elmendorf remarked that this, along with the other buildings shown were totally destroyed. This is not at all true. They are untouched excepting for a few window panes which were broken by bullets in the University building. I slept in that building on the twenty-eighth of August, and visited it later, the fourth of October, 1914. The destruction of buildings in Liege would not equal in loss the amount of a fair-sized fire in Chicago, such as causes public comment for two or three days only. This is mentioned merely to indicate the unconscious dissemination of exaggerated and false statements by presumed authorities.

constructs as well as destroys, but such statements make good moral shrapnel against the sons of the Kaiser, and so we have to take it, requiring as we do, news and war pictures.

The moral responsibility for the desecration and destruction of churches would be difficult to place. It is certain that where engagements or battles did not take place the churches are intact, and in good shape. I have photographed German soldiers at prayer in these same churches, and witnessed the Kaiser participating in the services. But where they did take place in towns or cities the place at once and automatically became a citadel and fort under military law and the highest point of vantage for observation and signaling was invariably the church, whether it was a thousand years old, and decorated with masterpieces of Rubens and Van Dyke, or six months old, and plastered with machine-made statuary from Neuilly, Paris.

Obviously, if a people purposed to save its churches from an attacking army, they should exercise as much intelligence, at least, as the partridge, which instinctively seeks to beguile the hound away from its nest. France took her churches away from God some few years ago and added them to the list of government property; and, anyway, God doesn't seem to

be much concerned with the present war; for the good people of Belgium, France, England, Russia, Germany and Austria, and, I doubt not, Servia and Turkey, are holding simultaneous intercessionals to Him for success in killing their Christian neighbors. I am sure, if what General Von Zweel, commanding the German forces before Rheims, told me was true, that the French were observed signaling their artillery from the cathedral tower, and that he sent several parley emissaries to warn them, without effect, then the desecration was first committed by our French friends, and they were alone responsible for forcing the bombardment. I think it is fair to say they were the inciting cause. My observation during the past several years has been that the "Hun" has as much respect for churches, generally, as the "Frank."

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul (Resigned).

THE BLOOD OF AMERICA

American Consulate,
Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany.

To the Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:—

I have the honor to submit the following studies on the subject of the "Blood of America," and the part contributed thereto by the German:

The contribution of Germany to that marvelous composite which forms the American has been great almost beyond calculation, but not of modern Germany, that Germany we see today fighting for the results of her new national life. The hordes of German immigrants that passed through the broad and open gateways of America in the earlier days have long since dwindled to trickling streams of relatives of the composite American and to artists, scientists, and commercial representatives. Out of that older supply of German blood, and running into the

second, third, fourth generation, etc., there should be no less than twenty-five million souls in the United States, who spring through direct, or indirect descent, from full or mixed German parentage. It may be truthfully said that this enormous and much mixed element in our blood has never, heretofore, had occasion to express itself as a solidarity with but a few local and insignificant exceptions. The German immigrant to America sprang almost entirely from the humbler, more ignorant peasant population of the various kingdoms, principalities, etc., of the old defunct German confederation. They came as refugees from apparently hopeless political and economic conditions, and they were absorbed by millions into this composite body. Beyond the second generation little is left to distinguish their origin besides the name and possibly present harking back in sentiment to the vine and fig tree of the Fatherland.

In the year 1750 there were, in the colony of Pennsylvania, over fifty thousand German residents and settlers. Now, according to the rule used by statisticians, in estimating the growth of population, in a new and progressive country, these figures may be doubled for each twenty-five years. On this

basis there would be, at the present time, over five million Germans, or persons of full German blood in or coming from the state of Pennsylvania alone. It happens that in this instance we have figures of an early date. The question was at that time discussed in the Pennsylvania colonial assembly as to whether the proceedings of that body should not be conducted in the German language. It was shortly after this that the Mecklenburg declaration of independence was issued by German patriots, at Charlotte, North Carolina. This antedated the Philadelphia declaration by one year. Up to 1871, no proper record was kept by the United States Government of immigration, but the largest immigration we have ever had came to us from Germany. And based upon more or less actual figures, a fair estimate is reached of the astounding fact that nearly one-third of the white blood of America is today purely Germanic; one-quarter Celtic, one-eighth Scandinavian, a considerable percentage of Dutch, Italian, French, Spanish and Russian, and finally about one-eighth of what we call, in the commonly accepted sense of the term, Anglo-Saxon.

It is true, and possibly fortunate, for us, that we are possessed today of English laws,

language and institutions, generally, a fact due to the control of the colonial governments, courts, schools and other institutions, by England. Interwoven into the history and growth of the country, like threads of gold, are the names of Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, the Adamses, Jackson, Fremont, Lincoln, Lee, etc. But when the tie between England and the colonies was finally severed in 1790, a new race and blood product was born into the world. It is a myth, a legend and a mistake to look upon England as the mother country. The American people are, in the matter of purely blood relationship to Europe, less English than they are Scandinavian, and more German than anything else. Nevertheless, our impetus, or progress and civic development, was received from this, at the time, leading nation of the world, England, and what we have of good, as well as evil, we have largely from her. Our much praised political freedom, along with our unemployed; our opportunities for success and advantage as an individual, parallel with the muddling, inefficient effort to advance the general welfare; our immense success in spots, and lamentable failures in other directions; these are the results of national ideals inherited from England. There is something

new in this respect, however, in the world, and if we, like England, close our eyes to it, much the worse for us, as it may be for her.

It seems for Germany that God endowed this particular part of the world with an indigenous atmosphere of human fecundity, a fact which has enabled the Germans to send out streams of life to all parts of the earth, and to increase their population, even now at home, more rapidly than any similar number of people anywhere. This, of course, refers only to increase by native birth. In those primitive days, when, according to Gibbon, the German forests were teeming with barbarians, the Angles occupied Briton, the Franks and Burgundians, Gaul, the Lombards, Upper Italy, and later the millions to America, to Brazil, Australia, Africa and Asia; all proving that one of the characteristics of the Germans has ever been the so-called "Wanderlust." "*Aus aus in die weite, weite Welt, dort wo du nicht bist, dort ist das Gluck.*"

Up to 1870 the German had no real nationality. He was a poet, a philosopher, or a soldier, peculiarly adapted to absorption wherever he might find himself. But today all is changed under the inspiration and guidance of one of the dominating great

masters of men, and by one of those phenomenally rare processes of nature, he arises a rejuvenated race. The gods have given Germany a new youth. That great *Drang nach Aussen*, that age old, pathetic and never dying *Wanderlust*, which for centuries resulted only in the building up of other lands, has at last been dammed, and from this great and inexhaustible reservoir of enterprise she has launched a thousand ships and forces, directed to the uttermost parts of the earth for the occupation thereof, as a World Power and economic entity.

With a scientific and purely business-like administration of the affairs of the people, where duty is the first consideration of citizenship and "rights" a proper second, she stands today, after a brief career of forty years, the most brilliant and unparalleled example of the effectiveness of government, so-called, perhaps in the history of man.

It appears to me that Germany is organized on the principle of the people being the stockholders, and the government the board of directors, of a great industrial concern. The question of government, in its ethical sense, resolving itself into a matter of the direction and control of the natural resources and productive forces of the country for the

greatest good of all, with the overworked shibboleth of the rights of man, solved, practically a century ago, being left to the academician and demagogue, while real Germany, with her modern team-work and practical applications of socialism—not to forget her administration by trained and specialized experts—has quietly and surely stepped into the lead amongst the nations of the earth.

The ideals of man today are economic, and Germany is astride, armed cap-a-pie, of this supreme fact of modern life. Her savings, through the investments of industrial insurance funds, already form the treasure of a nation. Over twenty million workers stand under the mantel of this protection with resources of more than three billion of dollars. If her canals and navigable rivers were given to the United States in like proportion, as regards length of water courses and area of land, they would extend in twenty parallel lines across the continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific and in forty parallel lines from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. There is a greater freight tonnage on the river Rhine alone than on all our great lake system. Her prosperity and material progress are such that she must employ some three millions

of female workers in the fields to garner the harvests, so plentiful through intensive and scientific cultivation, an element in her life that contributes enormously to the health and virility of the race. I might enumerate a hundred of things, like the German marine, education, chambers of commerce, railroads, municipal improvements—I could speak of these things and many others, and they would show but the modern and up-to-date organization as a really new force in the world—a state administered on business principles, and a state, not old, but one just entering upon and at the commencement of the fruition of successful achievement. Germany may be defeated in war but she is already the victor in the real rivalry of the states of the world in peaceful competition.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul (Resigned).

THE ATTITUDE AND DUTY OF AMERICA

American Consulate,
Aix-la-Chapelle, Germany.

To the Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:—

I have the honor to suggest for the consideration of the Department the following proposals respecting the attitude and duty of our government in relation to the present war in Europe.

A suspended judgment on the war is the important thing for America. Difficult as this may be, under the circumstances, it is the one great desideratum for the United States. The coincidental fact that coupled with a preponderating sentiment of the American people against the German, there exists likewise a condition which makes us a large and powerful contributor to the forces of his opponents, possibly even to becoming the determining factor in the outcome of the

conflict, makes it doubly incumbent upon us to exercise great caution in taking a positive position, lest we be unfair.

The various Foreign Offices of Europe make out their cases under the published title of the White, Yellow, or some other Book of this or that country. Each proves its own contention, that the immediate, if not entire, responsibility for the opening of hostilities rests upon the other party. We take our choice, perhaps, according to our instincts, sympathies, prejudices, or, if possessed of average fairness of mind, following such information as we may obtain, be it interested, or disinterested. The following expression is cited as illustrating the American's attitude of neutrality: "Sure I'm perfectly neutral, I don't care which nation licks Germany!" Now the fact that the German, as an individual, is more of a personal favorite with the American than is the Englishman, would indicate that our position is not predicated on favoritism or purely sentimental inclination.

The thought exists very generally throughout America that Germany precipitated the war, or that, if she did not do that, she, at least, was in a position to prevent it. That may be true or not, but the same claim may

be made of Austria, Russia, France or England. There is little doubt that any of those five powers could have checked hostilities, if, indeed, not even prevented them, altogether. It seems that both Germany and England did try this. My conviction is that neither of these powers desired war, though a successful war offered advantages to both of them—to England in the maintenance of her foremost place as a World Power, and to Germany as a release from the pressure and restrictions being put upon her by the Entente.

However, the chief question now for the United States is what we can do to prepare ourselves for and to aid in bringing about peace, and a peace that cannot again be easily disturbed. It is not impossible that the eventual decision of this war may lie with us. Owing to our wealth, power, and advanced place as a world force, we should automatically come to the position of final peacemaker and arbiter of the nations at war. If this be true, it is of transcendant importance that we have a clear national vision and comprehension of the fundamental causes and events of the war, unaffected by prejudices, sympathies or misinformation.

It will be of no avail, nor lead to any real solution to point to Servia's assassination of

the head of a neighboring state, nor to Austria's peremptory demands on Servia. It will not answer to point to the hostile and threatening mobilization of Russia against Austria and Germany, and the latter's swift movement across Belgium to the North Sea, and France seeking to balance, in a measure, the tremendous odds forming against her, by her mobility and preparedness.

All these things will be of no avail. Each nation is justified in its own conscience for its action. We must not overlook this. These people are very highly civilized. They are all firmly convinced that God and Right are on their side. Their hearts are full of human love and honor. They are the victims of a vast and fatal miscalculation, a system of international rivalry, and a soulless Machiavellian foreign office—of intrigue and barter. A long, educational, political campaign and eventual plebiscite must be had for the most insignificant change in the internal policy of a nation. Its foreign relations and power to make war are as much in the hands of one man, or a small group of men, today, as they were in the time of Caesar or Peter the Great. And this is likewise true, though in less degree, perhaps, of us.

What, then, are we to learn from the war?

What are we to gain? Will the end fix forever the solution of the question of national armament or disarmament?

Shall we be able to learn whether, or no, we must become a part of a great world contest for military power, on sea or land? Whether the gauge of greatness of a people shall really be in their dreadnaughts and land military establishments—whether, in fact, the determination of England to maintain her place as mistress of the sea, or Germany's purpose to remain the chief continental political force have justified, in any way, the great expenditures the world has witnessed, or the enormous loss of life now taking place. If we shall be able to predicate our own future from these present events, that may be worth while to us.

But greater than all may be our opportunity, at this moment, to direct the future course of international ambition and international ideals. In this respect we still occupy the favored position, and should make the most of it. We have a supreme and magnificent duty and work before us; and, according to our real nobleness of mind and foresight, we can perform this duty. How insignificant and paltry, then, must be the attitude of small partisanship. We must,

if necessary, rise above the trammeling level of so-called international laws, which bind us, as an unwilling, though neutral, participant in the war, and drags us along, without voice or power, toward the tremendous solution of this final problem of the relationship of the nations of the world.

I am told that in the State Department there was great agitation and apparent confusion on the third and fourth of August of last year, that the one ray of light and satisfaction existing there in those fatal hours was the vista of a great opening for American business and export trade. Be this as it may, what an opportunity there was for Mr. Wilson to then and there have placed the United States on a plane that would have made these belligerent friends of ours to pause and realize there was a force in the world greater even than their dreadnaughts or Krupp mortars.

The declaration of American neutrality should have taken the form of an act of Congress, and it should have been of a character comporting with the bigness of the war and the issues which may come out of it. We should have announced, not from the State Department, but as an expression of all the people, a super-neutrality. We should

have protested against the war to every nation, and as fast as they became involved, no matter what their Yellow, White, or Blue Books might say, we should have withdrawn our representatives from those countries and closed our ports entirely to their commerce, ships and cables. That would have been a neutrality which would have allowed us to formulate the future great Peace Pact of the world. To introduce, when the moment arrived, the proposal for an international constitution, or world contract, out of which would naturally evolve those world courts of Law and Equity and Arbitration, of which we have dreamed, and endeavored to promote, without the foundation—necessary for any competent court—an existing statutory, international law. The great biological decree and law of nature, that might is right, is but another name for International Law, or the Law of Nations—gloss it over as we may. The principles and precepts of these hazy international regulations must ever have, under present conditions, their final adjudication at the cannon's mouth. And this is because each nation interprets the so-called rules of international law according to its own particular traditions, prejudices and interests. A high international court, supreme

in the matter of the relations of one nation to another, could only be founded upon a genuine international law, and such international law is not now a fixed institution. Statutory law is as necessary a precedent to the formation of a competent court as city ordinances are to a police court. We can never, therefore, have such international tribunals as we have been endeavoring to promote at the Hague and elsewhere, until we first create a real international law, and such a law must eventually take the form of an international constitution, or world contract. Such a contract embodying even the very first and most primitive rules of international law, which presumably would be acceptable to all nations, would be sufficient to automatically create the great need for an interpretation of such rules, in their application to questions of facts and equity arising between the nations. With such a beginning the development of an international statute to meet the problems of relations between the nations might be assured.

However, we did not rise to the occasion. We looked backwards fifty, one hundred, a thousand years for precedents and rules for a stand that would serve to eliminate us from a part in this upheaval and readjustment

of the relationship of nations. Mr. Wilson and you, Mr. Bryan, threw away the opportunity, in this first instance, to lay the foundation for the much dreamed of and hoped for federation of the world.

But is it too late, even now, to strive for this end? I do not think so. In the articles I have written on the causes and merits of the controversy, between England and Germany especially, I have been moved, particularly, by the wish to show the equities of the situation from the German side, not with the wish to excite a reversal of American sentiment, *per se*, but to prepare the public mind for a clearer and fairer judgment than it can now render.

So far as the end of the war is concerned, there is no indication of it anywhere. Italy and Roumania are not the solution. Germany is impregnable on her own territory, and impregnable against the world. Against her, on the other hand, stands a force apparently impossible of destruction or defeat. It resolves, itself, therefore, into a proposition in physics—the collision of two irresistible bodies. Now, these are our own people. What can we do to save them from themselves and one another? If we wait until one or the other cries "Enough," we

will wait too long. Dreadnaughts, aeroplanes, submarines and Zeppelins are new elements in warfare. Their great power for destruction demands also new and unusual methods toward peace. Are we to wait until two thousand pound cargoes of nitro-glycerine are dropped on the city of London? I shall be frank and say I am convinced that the Germans hold the trump card in the fight, not in a general way, but through specific knowledge—applied to the means of war, and that, through the demonstration of a superior and more rational civilization than any other state has so far shown, the merits of the contest, so far as this goes, are on her side. But if this, or any other superiority in offence, results in the destruction of England, or France, or of Germany, and we might be the means of preventing it, and did not do all in our power to do so, the fault of omission on our part would be great, if not so great as the crime of commission on the part of any one of the belligerents.

Therefore, I propose that a peace commission be at once formed by Congress, to be composed of our two ex-presidents and three others, who shall be authorized to confer at once with the powers at war with the view of bringing about a cessation of hostilities, and that they

be further delegated to propose the complete disarmament at sea and on the land of the several powers of the world. It will come to this eventually. Why not rise to the occasion and prepare for it now?

In view of this duty, existing now, or ahead of the United States, it is of supreme importance that, whatever our reason tells us, as to the virtues of the great controversy, we check and suppress our sympathies and prejudices, and refrain from weakening our position, or making ourselves impossible as the final forces which shall determine the direction and course to be taken at the settlement of the war.

We cannot go back to the ententes and alliances, to the annexation of Herzegovina and Bosnia, the assassination of Ferdinand, the ultimatum of Austria, the mobilization of Russia, the breach of Belgian neutrality—we must look solely to the future, and that future must be an assurance to mankind that neither Foreign Secretaries, Kings, nor Presidents, may ever again upset the peace of the world, either through ententes and alliances, or superiority in armament, on the land, at sea, or in the air.

There are several conditions in Europe, at present, we should understand: First, neither

of the chief belligerents are thinking of peace, and would probably repel any ordinary effort to introduce the subject. In Germany there is a supreme and exalted confidence in the favorable outcome of the war to them. The same may be said also of the feeling in England. Each one regards it its duty to defeat the other and does not, as yet, question the final issue. These conditions we would have to face. So much greater might be the success of our efforts.

As to the feeling of the belligerents toward us, it is simple enough. The Allies know they have the sympathy at present of the American people, generally, and they consider this as a great moral, if not material asset. Germany witnesses the matter with stoicism, and a recognition of the technical justification of our position. She has full confidence in our fairness, and feels only that she has been misrepresented and misunderstood, and that time will set her right.

Germany does not, nor did she ever wish to make Belgium a part of German territory. A treaty of peace such as Germany may dictate to England will probably result in the restoration to Belgium of her sovereignty—the repayment to Liege, Brussels and Antwerp and her other cities and provinces, of

the war tributes exacted from them, and when the final accounting is made, Germany will not disappoint the world in her generosity to this crushed and unhappy state. She wants no more from Belgium, even now, than she asked of her, as a life and death necessity, on the third of August, at the commencement of the war.

The moral, practical and Christian forces of the United States of America are now being weighed in the balance. Shall we be found wanting? Or shall we rise to this occasion, supreme in our history, and which shall never pass our way again?

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ROBERT J. THOMPSON,
American Consul (Resigned).

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